

ALDAN BOROUGH, DELAWARE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

December 10, 2014

The Borough Council met in an Executive Session at 7:30 p.m. and in a regular session at 8:00 p.m. at the William Reindl Recreation Building on the above date with President Short presiding.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and led by President Short.

ROLL CALL

Council members present: H. Short; P. Rankin; J. White; S. Coppola;
M. Xavier; S. Oropollo; M. J. Corrigan

Council members absent: None

Officers present: G. Sefflin, Solicitor; J. Hopely, Mayor
G. Kaut, Secretary T. Quinn, Treasurer

Officers absent: None

MINUTES

On a motion made by Councilwoman Rankin seconded by Councilman White the minutes from the November 12, 2014, Council Meeting be accepted as presented and unanimously approved.

WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE

No written correspondence tonight.

VERBAL CORRESPONDENCE

President Short introduced Christine Helmandollar from Senior Community Services who wanted to thank the Borough of Aldan for making the \$500 donation to Senior Community Services. Christine explained she has a new initiative with helping people in their homes. An example of this was a senior from Aldan received a letter and the letter was to get her place inspected but she was ignoring the letter. She didn't think she had to get the inspection because she kept up her property but also kept ignoring the letters and then received a ticket. Christine went to the Borough and found out what the issue was went back explained to the senior the property needs to be inspected to make sure it is up to code because you have a renter.

Christine explained she just needed that extra step and that's what the program is all about. Aging at home a community network is the newest program.

Christine commented she has a wonderful replacement, Barbara Caso, and she has the experience. Christine likes to come to Council once a year to explain and show Council that these programs at Senior Community Services are working for Aldan. Every day they do 22 meals daily to people in the community, actively Aldan has 21 residents going to the Center 3 to 5 days a week to take a class. Dan Procopio was instrumental with the Aldan Boosters in helping reach the seniors to hear about the new program Aging At Home. Boosters handed out flyers to everyone and the turnout was about 40 people and they now have 40 seniors signed onto Aging At Home, we have done free yard work, and plenty of transportation and to help with anything that maintains your home. Reconnect, renew and revitalize is what the mission for the Senior Community Center is now. Barbara Caso explained they will be trying to bring different forms of technology. We are working with other centers and people in the community to bring in programs from museums to be able to travel through SKYPE and bring this to the people in the community and the centers.

MAYOR REPORT

Mayor Hopely wished Happy Birthday to Bette Alburger, the reporter who writes about Aldan Borough.

Mayor Hopely read a note addressed to Chief Coppola, Sincere thanks to you and your officer for coming to check on our neighbor's house when I thought something might be wrong. I appreciate all your department does to keep us safe.

Mayor Hopely also read another letter to the Chief, I would like to personally thank you for the assistance provided by the Aldan Police Department, in reference to a shooting incident that occurred on Wednesday, November 12, 2014 at the Lansdowne Tower Apartments. The Aldan Police Department working in tandem with the Upper Darby Police Department addressed each detail of this tenuous situation with precision and professionalism. I appreciate your support and the support of the Aldan Police Department. Sincerely, Michael Chitwood, Superintendent of Police of Upper Darby.

Mayor Hopely along with Chief Coppola and the Officers of Aldan Police Department wish those who live, work and play in the Borough of Aldan a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS**TREASURER**

Terry Quinn read the Treasurer's Report:

	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>State Highway Fund</u>	<u>Sewer Fund</u>
Balance of cash on hand	\$ 419,132.53	\$ 48,658.60	\$ 85,331.89
Interest	\$	\$	\$
Receipts for period	\$ 26,345.31	\$.91	\$ 3,791.16
Expenditures Last Month	\$ 167,147.58	\$ 6,568.37	\$ 809.55
Expenditures This Month	\$ 301,016.90	\$ 6,568.37	\$ 686.50
Net Expenditures	\$ 462,776 .52		
Ending Balance	\$ -17,298.68	\$ 35,522.77	\$ 87,627.00

Terry explained funds will be taken from the General Reserve to cover the deficit.

Councilwoman Rankin made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented and authorize her to release the checks as indicated on the bills list, seconded by Councilman Xavier and unanimously approved.

SOLICITOR

Mr. Seflin reported we did receive back the Winter Services Agreement for 2014 -2019 this was awarded last month and signed by A to U Services, Inc., President Short, and the Borough Secretary and now we are contractually ready.

Mr. Seflin reported an old Tax Delinquency from 2009; the owners just walked away, and then the property was foreclosed by the Mortgage Company and when the Mortgage Company went to sell it the title company discovered there was a large lien, which they paid \$2,126.78 and that includes interest from the first day we filed the lien early in 2010. Mr. Seflin did release the lien on the property.

ENGINEER

Mr. Close reported on our 2014 CDBG Project for the I & I rehab work at our Meter 3 collection system. Mr. Close heard from the county that our contract documents are all in order and we expect to receive the notice to proceed to advertise this week. Depending on when it comes out it would put us on target to advertise for an opening of bids at the January caucus meeting or the February caucus meeting. We would look to start construction in March, 2015 and will take 45 to 60 days to complete that work.

Mr. Close reported with the New Year ahead we have some year end, year transition that we do; our ongoing NPS Storm Water Permitting tasks, relative to our 2014 Road Program, we completed the final completion report and will be submitting that to PennDot this week, and once that is accepted we can receive our County Aid money for our Annual Road Program and also for the Pot Hole money this year. We do a Chapter 94 Sewer Report, which is for annual sewer planning. Early in 2015 we will meet with Public Works Committee Chairman Oropollo to look at some sewer I & I type of projects we can plan for the year. We will continue to monitor the status of our DELCORA PA DEP Act 537 Plan Update and around March we start thinking about our 2015 Road Program.

Dan Procopio commented he noticed that the water flows for sewage treatment for the year November, 2013 to September, 2014 had tremendous fluctuation so obviously there is a lot of I & I. Dan asked are the meters accurate and if so which areas show the most inflow and what could be done to slow that down. Mr. Close explained from December to March when the ground water tables are the highest, this year we had a ton of snow with frozen ground conditions mixed with a lot of precipitation, so they are our worst months traditionally. It's infiltration a lot; with higher ground water tables and all the joints in the system are experiencing pressure from the water. That is when we have the most burdens. When you look at those flow rates traditionally when we get into the spring, summer and fall months the flows start to go down because the ground water tables are starting to drop in the warmer summer months you don't have the frozen ground conditions. That is the efforts we are doing with our I & I program. There is more of a burden on the Rively Avenue part of town because a lot of our CDBG money we are getting is devoted to our one eligible area. We have devoted a lot of energy there and we are seeing great strides in terms of the I & I work. One of the things we are going to be looking at is ways we can start budgeting and doing some segmental work year to year to try and knock down particularly that inflow in those winter months we are experiencing. Aldan has old systems and trying to do as much as we can and we know that problem exists and we feel like we are making strides year to year but it's not a couple of years job it's going to be over many years to fix this.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

PUBLIC HEALTH

Councilwoman Corrigan is happy to report on October 3rd we received a check totaling \$9,792.00 for our recycling grant for 2012. We recycled 774 tons of recycling material including residential and commercial. Councilwoman Corrigan reported our Solid Waste totals for November 162.68 tons; for October 147.73; September 159.29 tons and for Recycling for October 22.71 tons; September 23.23 tons and for August 25.80 tons.

Councilwoman Corrigan wanted to remind everyone there will be no trash pickup on Thursday, December 25th but trash will be picked up on Friday, December 26th.

Councilwoman Corrigan also reported the next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for January 12, 2015 at 7:00 pm.

President Short commented the recycling numbers are pretty good especially coming from a town that is not required to recycle. Councilwoman Corrigan explained that was our first year of curbside recycling. President Short commented that says a lot about the residents in Aldan and they really rise to the occasion and also saves money we pay the trash to steam people.

HIGHWAY

Councilman White reported we do have 50 tons of salt on hand so we are in good shape.

Councilman White also reported with anticipation of winter storms coming we will put a sign on the message board for residents. Any street with parking on both sides during snow storms please park on the even side of the street. This will make plowing much easier and the streets will be cleaner and safer.

PUBLIC WORKS

Councilman Oropollo reported we do not have any issues at the moment.

Councilman Oropollo also reported he will meet with our Engineer in January to try and address some issues with water flow and thing of that nature.

Councilman Oropollo wanted home owner to please do not dispose of sump pumps into the sinks that go into the sewer lines this is illegal and we are charged for this. Another issue we will be looking at laterals and how to make them a little more inaccessible to the rain water coming into them which we are also charged for.

FINANCE

Councilwoman Rankin presented the Tax Levy Ordinance for the Fiscal Year 2015. Councilwoman Rankin had some notes about the budget for 2015.

Aldan Borough Council had held the line and presents a No Tax Increase Budget for Fiscal Year 2015. Overall, revenues and expenses in the General Fund will increase .8%, less the One Percent over 2014 revenue and expenses.

The total revenues and expenses for the General Fund Budget is \$1,892,556.00 and for the Sanitary Sewer Budget is \$777,127.75.

Through careful budget management in 2014, Borough Council is able to budget a cash on hand surplus for 2015 in the amount of \$33,882.60, a reversal from the past several years when the poor economic climate led to increased expenses and decreased revenue which necessitated the use of General Fund reserve funds for operations.

The Real Estate Tax millage rate will remain at 7.4985 mills for 2015, the same as 2014. For 2015, Real Estate Tax revenue is actually budgeted at a decrease of 1.5% from 2014. Aldan's Tax Collector and Borough Council are pleased to report that through the November Financial Report, 96% of Real Estate Taxes were collected. This figure will increase with December end of year collections. This is a tribute to the responsibility of Aldan's property owners and taxpayers.

Other revenue categories are budgeted relatively even with 2014 Budget estimates. Actual collections for 2014 show that some revenue categories, such as Licenses & Permits and Fines, are just below budget projections while others, such as Real Estate Transfer Tax and Miscellaneous Income, have exceeded budget projections. The result is that through the November Financial Report, Borough Council's 2014 budget varies less than One Percent from actual revenues – evidencing extremely accurate budget estimates by Borough Council.

Police Protection continues to be the greatest expense to Aldan Borough. Police expenses have been held in check for 2015, with a budgeted increase in spending of only \$793 over the total budgeted expenditures for 2014, an increase of only .4%, less than one half of One Percent. Borough Council has managed to offset the cost of increased personnel cost for full time and part time officers with savings in police car operations. Police Operations account for 40% of all budgeted expenses and account for 57% of the Real Estate Tax millage rate.

General Administration of the Borough Government is budgeted for a slight increase to reflect projected personnel needs in 2015. This increase of approximately \$16,000 is approximately .85% of overall 2015 General Fund spending.

The budget expense projections for Health & Sanitation, Highways, Fire Protection, Law & Ordinance and Recreation remain relatively the same as budgeted projections for 2014. These budget areas actually are projected for a slight decrease in spending in 2015 due to efficiencies put in place by Borough Council.

As noted above, a budget surplus of almost \$34,000.00 is budgeted for 2015. Spending control and budget management of the part of Borough Council and Borough personnel shows that through the November Financial Report, Borough Council spent 86 % of budgeted expenditures in 2014. While December payments are still due, it is expected that actual expenditures will very little from the 2014 budgeted expenses. This budget management becomes more apparent when factors such as the snow removal efforts needed during last winter are considered.

Expenses and fees for trash collection and disposal remain level with costs for 2014 and there is no increase in the Trash Fee.

The Sanitary Sewer Budget will experience an increase implemented by the Darby Creek Joint Sewer Authority. Borough Council will keep local sewer maintenance expenses level with 2014 budgeted expenses. However, the Darby Creek Joint Sewer Authority is implementing a 14% increase in the charge to Aldan, \$94,842.75 over 2014 charges. Borough Council will not pass this entire increase on to Borough Taxpayers. Utilizing sewer cash on hand and reserves, it will only be necessary to charge \$20 per unit to cover the DCJA increase.

Aldan remains debt free. There is no debt service expense budgeted for 2015. Likewise, Aldan anticipates having sufficient reserve funds to pay expenses through the first quarter of 2015 with therefore no projected need for any tax anticipation loan.

Unlike many municipalities, Aldan continues to budget for and make its required contribution to the Police Pension Fund.

In 2015, Borough Council will continue to practice good budget management to effectively manage its expenses through the year. Borough Council will continue to search for new revenue opportunities that will not impact Borough taxpayers, such as federal, state and county grants and user fees. With the budget difficulties at the federal and state level, grants that were available in the past for police, recreation and infrastructure improvements have been severely curtailed or eliminated. Grants have become much more competitive with other municipalities. Borough Council will strive to uncover every opportunity to obtain such funding, particularly for the improvement of Borough Parks and Recreation needs. Council believes such improvements are very important to the quality of life in our Borough.

Borough Council is committed to continually evaluating Borough practices and procedures, for budget management and personnel, to ensure the most effective practices and people are in place. As well as many Councils and administrations have managed budgets and spending over many years, we as a Borough must continually improve and be flexible enough to implement practices that will deliver the services that our residents want at the most cost efficient expense.

Councilwoman Rankin made a motion to adopt Borough of Aldan Ordinance 515, Tax Levy Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2015, the tax rate for General Purposes, the sum of 3.2244 mills; for police salaries and fringe benefits required by Act 111/Police Purposes, the sum of 4.2741 mills; seconded by Councilman Coppola and unanimously approved.

Dan Procopio asked for the balances in the Reserve Funds and if that included or not include the transfer the Treasurer spoke of: in the General Reserve \$456,305.28; in the Sewer Capital Reserve \$566,771.48; and in the Police Capital Reserve \$1,000.52 and all reconciled on November 30, 2014 and this does not count the transfer.

Dan Procopio had some questions about the budget: Dan commented he noticed the Police did not go up that much there is a 3% on Salary & Expenses? Councilwoman Rankin explained that is part of the contract and that contract expires at the end of 2015. Dan noted in the Highway Budget the street light expenses dropped and traffic lights went up what is the reason for that adjustment. Councilwoman Rankin explained the street lights was because we have the new LED lights and it is a good return on our investment. Dan thought the traffic lights had the LED lights and that was correct. Dan asked what the assessment number for the property values for 2015? Councilwoman Rankin reported the Assessment Value for 2015 is \$162,682,323.00. Dan noticed in General Administrations the Secretary Salary has been changed to Borough Manager but he had not heard any discussion at a public meeting and wanted to know if there was a job description written out for the Manager. President Short answered yes there is. Dan asked if it is a full time position, President Short responded it is. Dan asked will the job be posted for applicants. President Short responded we have taken consideration of candidates. Mr. Sefflin explained the position has not been created yet and this is all preliminary discussion, subject to change when Council takes formal action. And if they take formal action there will be advertisement in public forums so really what you are engaging in right now is rumors

Dan said it's not a rumor it is in the budget for a Borough Manager for next year. Council doesn't have to spend what is in the budget. There is no position that has been created, when it's created that is when it would be a more appropriate time to ask these questions. Dan responded this is the first time it came up. Mr. Seflin again explained there is no position right now in the Borough of Aldan of Borough Manager. Mr. Seflin said, Dan I know you know about Borough Code and under new Borough Code that was passed this year there are 3 sections in there that deal with Borough Managers. It says a Borough Manager position must be created by Borough Council by an Ordinance and we have no such Ordinance that has been enacted yet. When and if that happens it will be advertised in the public forums required by Borough Code, which is generally advertised in a newspaper of general circulation. If that does happen as we do with most Ordinances it will also be advertised on the web site.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Councilman Xavier reported on Safety Tips for Christmas; while out shopping try to avoid doing most of your shopping in one trip as you may struggle to carry all your bags therefore you will be distracted, making it easier for a thief to steal from you. Ladies keep your handbag close to you. Everyone keep your cell phones out of sight. Try not to go back to your car multiple times during your shopping trip to put gifts in the car; thieves may be watching cars for this opportunity. Always put your gifts in the trunk of the car and not in the back seat. Remember at restaurants and other social events don't leave your purse on the back of a chair where it is easy for thieves to run off with them. At home try to avoid putting gifts under the tree until Christmas Eve people can see through your windows. If you go out for the evening make sure that some lights are left on so it looks like someone is home. Do not leave your Christmas tree lights on when you are out of the house. Also make sure your real tree has water. If you are going away fill out an Away form at Aldan Police and have some of your lights on timers. Also after Christmas when you take your trash out don't leave boxes outside that indicate you just got expensive electronics which makes you more of a target.

Councilman Xavier read the Fire Marshal's Report; Collingdale Fire Companies #1 and #2 responded to 6 calls in the Borough for November, 2014, 5 resulting in no damage but 1 had about \$330,000.00 in damages. During the month of November, 2014, Collingdale Ambulance/Paramedics responded to 43 calls in the Borough. Councilman Xavier also had a note from the Fire Marshal Fireplaces, wood burning stoves and other types open flame appliances and chimneys should be kept cleaned and serviced in insure proper and safe use. Live Christmas trees should be kept in water and away from any heat source or ignition points. "Don't let your dreams to up in smoke" have a safe and joyous holiday season.

Dan Procopio commented he noticed there were no minutes posted on the web site after March, 2014. Councilman Xavier responded that he and Joe Cosgrove have been going back and forth with the host of our web site and will make sure he looks into the matter.

LAW, ORDINANCE COMMITTEE

Councilman Coppola reported for the month of November the Building Inspector issued 18 building permits with a construction value of \$54,489.00, and there were 22 Transfer and Mid Term inspections during the month of November.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

President Short reported Caucus will be Wednesday, January 7, 2015 at 7:30 P.M. at the Municipal Building and Council will meet on Wednesday, January 14, 2015 at 7:30 PM for Executive Session; and General Meeting starting at 8:00 PM. at the William Reinl Recreation Building.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Tom Morse, Aldan Tax Collector commented there were a number of Aldan residents who received 2 letters from the William Penn School District regarding past due taxes. The first one was to everyone who didn't pay their taxes in full as of yet. The people who were on a payment plan they sent a nasty letter saying your taxes are past due, you need to pay them in full by December 17th which was wrong and then tacked on a penalty. We received many, many phone calls about this situation. The School District did acknowledge that was a mistake on their part so they sent a second letter retracting it but they still didn't get that right. Along with the open balance that attached extra penalties that were incorrect. The latest is if someone has not paid their taxes at all they still have till December 31, 2014 to pay at the original penalty amount, which is 10% above the face amount. The 3rd installment was due December 6, 2014. They also told Mr. Morse if the resident held the 3rd installment back because of the letter you can still pay the 3rd installment without penalty. Residents were very upset and Mr. Morse encouraged them to vent their grievances at the next school board meeting.

John McBlain wanted to acknowledge Ginger at her last meeting. Mr. McBlain had the privilege to serve with Ginger. Mr. McBlain said he didn't know when she started with the Borough Ginger knew everything she was in for in the long run. She has always been the hub of information in the Borough and our direct point of contact with the public. Mr. McBlain commented on his time on Council and for the time afterwards as a political leader have never heard one individual in Aldan give anything but praise when they spoke to Ginger Kaut at the Borough. John said I'm sure it can be a very frustrating job talking to the public and dealing with the Councilmembers, the Mayor, and the Police. Ginger is somebody that has always has a kind word for everybody even the resident complaining justified or not and spoke nothing but well of the resident. Nothing but joy to work with and we certainly will be the poorer for not having her in service at Aldan Borough. Mr. McBlain said I wish her luck with Bob and her family and enjoy everything. John said I'm sure she will get itchy after the first couple of weeks of no complaints or phone calls. John again said good luck and thank you.

Dan Procopio wanted to thank everyone who attended the Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on the rainy Saturday. Dan wanted to thank our Borough Secretary for lighting the tree, both inside and outside. Dan was happy about Mr. McBlain's comments and was happy the Civic Groups were able to honor Ginger last month and we will all miss you but know you are still around.

Dan reported the Boosters have the Santa Mailbox out and our Troop Letter Mailbox, being handled this year by the American Legion. Boosters will be awarding Best Decorated Houses and Santa visits all the children in town and registrations are coming in. Thank you very much everybody and have a good holiday.

President Short on behalf of the Mayor and Borough Council wanted to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Councilman Xavier and seconded by Councilwoman Rankin unanimously, approved, the regular meeting of the Borough Council was adjourned at 8:50 P.M.

ATTEST

MARIE V. KAUT
Borough Secretary